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ments may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, the invention is not to be limited except as by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of processing symbolic representations of dates stored in a database, comprising the steps of
 - providing a database with symbolic representations of dates stored therein according to a format wherein M₁M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁D₂ is the numerical day designator, and Y₁Y₂ is the numerical year designator, all of the symbolic representations of dates falling within a 10-decade period of time;
 - selecting a 10-decade window with a Y_AY_B value for the first decade of the window, Y_AY_B being no later than the earliest Y₁Y₂ year designator in the database;
 - determining a century designator C₁C₂ for each symbolic representation of a date in the database, C₁C₂ having a first value if Y₁Y₂ is less than Y_AY_B and having a second value if Y₁Y₂ is equal to or greater than Y_AY_B;
 - and
 - reformatting the symbolic representation of the date with the values C₁C₂, Y₁Y₂, M₁M₂, and D₁D₂ to facilitate further processing of the dates.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the 10-decade window includes the decade beginning in the year 2000.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of determining includes the step of
 - determining the first value as 20 and the second value as 19.
4. The method of claim 1, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of
 - sorting the symbolic representations of dates.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of reformatting includes the step of
 - reformatting each symbolic representation of a date into the format C₁C₂Y₁Y₂M₁M₂D₁D₂.
6. The method of claim 5, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of
 - sorting the symbolic representations of dates using a numerical-order sort.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of providing a database includes the step of
 - converting pre-existing date information having a different format into the format wherein M₁M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁D₂ is the numerical day designator and Y₁Y₂ is the numerical year designator.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting includes the step of
 - selecting Y_AY_B such that Y_B is 0 (zero).
9. The method of claim 1, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of
 - storing the symbolic representation of dates and their associated information back into the database.
10. The method of claim 9, including the additional step, after the step of reformatting, of
 - manipulating information in the database having the reformatted date information therein.
11. A method of processing dates in a database, comprising the steps of
 - providing a database with dates stored therein according to a format wherein M₁M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁D₂ is the numerical day designator, and Y₁Y₂ is the numerical year designator, all of dates falling within a 10-decade period of time which includes the decade beginning in the year 2000;

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selecting a 10-decade window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for the first decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

reformatting each date in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2 M_1 M_2 D_1 D_2$ to facilitate further processing of the dates; and

sorting the dates in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2 M_1 M_2 D_1 D_2$.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of providing a database includes the step of

converting pre-existing date information having a different format into the format wherein $M_1 M_2$ is the numeri-

cal month designator, D_1D_2 is the numerical day designator and Y_1Y_2 is the numerical year designator.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of selecting includes the step of
 - 5 selecting $Y_A Y_B$ such that Y_B is 0 (zero).
 - 10 14. The method of claim 11, including an additional step, after the step of sorting, of
 storing the sorted dates and their associated information back into the database.
 15. The method of claim 14, including the additional step, after the step of sorting, of
 manipulating information in the database having the reformatted date therein.

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16. (New) A method of processing symbolic representations of dates stored in a database, comprising the steps of:

5 providing a database with symbolic representations of dates stored therein according to a format wherein M_1 M_2 is the numerical month designator, D_1 D_2 is the numerical day designator, and Y_1 Y_2 is the numerical year designator, all of the symbolic representations of dates falling within a 10-decade period of time;

10 selecting a window with a Y_A Y_B value for a pivot date of the window, Y_A Y_B being no later than the earliest Y_1 Y_2 year designator in the database;

15 determining a century designator C_1 C_2 for each symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1 C_2 having a first value if Y_1 Y_2 is less than Y_A Y_B and having a second value if Y_1 Y_2 is equal to or greater than Y_A Y_B ; and

20 reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in the database, without the addition of any new data field to the database, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values C_1 C_2 , Y_1 Y_2 , M_1 M_2 , and D_1 D_2 , in order to

facilitate collectively further processing the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the symbolic representations of each of the dates.

17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the window includes at least a portion of the decade beginning in the year 2000.

18. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein the step of determining includes the step of:
10 determining the first value as 20 and the second value as 19.

19. (New) The method of claim 16, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of:
15 sorting the symbolic representations of dates.

20. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of reformatting includes the step of:
20 reformatting each symbolic representation of a date into the format C₁ C₂ Y₁ Y₂ M₁ M₂ D₁ D₂ separately from the symbolic representations in the database.

21. (New) The method of claim 20, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of:
20 sorting the symbolic representations of dates using a numerical-order sort.

22. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of providing a database includes the step of:

5 converting pre-existing date information having a different format into the format wherein M₁ M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁ D₂ is the numerical day designator and Y₁ Y₂ is the numerical year designator.

23. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein the step of selecting includes the step of:

10 selecting Y_A Y_B such that Y_B is 0 (zero)..

24. (New) The method of claim 16, including an additional step, after the step of reformatting, of:

storing the symbolic representation of dates and their associated information back into the database.

15 25. (New) The method of claim 24, including the additional step, after the step of reformatting, of:

manipulating information in the database having the reformatted date information therein.

20 26. (New) A method of processing dates in a database, comprising the steps of:

providing a database with dates stored therein according to a format wherein M₁ M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁ D₂ is the numerical day

designator, and $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year
designator, all of the symbolic representations of
dates falling within a 10-decade period of time;
selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot
5 date of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the
earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;
determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date
in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$
is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$
10 is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;
reformatting the symbolic representation of each
symbolic representation of a date in the database,
without the addition of any new data field to the
database, with the reformatted symbolic
15 representation of each date in the database having
the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, $M_1 M_2$, and $D_1 D_2$, in order to
facilitate collectively further processing the
reformatted symbolic representations of each of the
symbolic representations of each of the dates; and
20 sorting the dates in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2 M_1 M_2 D_1 D_2$.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the step of
providing a database includes the step of:

converting pre-existing date information having a
different format into the format wherein $M_1 M_2$ is the

numerical month designator, D₁ D₂ is the numerical day designator and Y₁ Y₂ is the numerical year designator.

28. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the step of

5 selecting includes the step of:

selecting Y_A Y_B such that Y_B is 0 (zero).

29. (New) The method of claim 26, including an

additional step, after the step of sorting, of:

10 storing the sorted dates and their associated information back into the database.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, including the

additional step, after the step of sorting, of:

manipulating information in the database having the reformatted dates therein.

15 31. (New) A method of processing symbolic representations of dates stored in a database, comprising the steps of:

20 providing a database with symbolic representations of dates stored therein according to a format wherein Y₁ Y₂ is the numerical year designator;

selecting a window with a Y_A Y_B value for the first decade of the window, Y_A Y_B being no later than the earliest Y₁ Y₂ year designator in the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each /
symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1
 C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$
and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or
5 greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and

reformatting the symbolic representation of each
symbolic representation of a date in the database,
without the addition of any new data field to the
database, with the reformatted symbolic
representation of each date in the database having
the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, in order to facilitate
collectively further processing the reformatted
symbolic representations of each of the symbolic
representations of each of the dates.

10 15 32. (New) A method of processing dates in a database,
comprising the steps of:
providing a database with symbolic representations of
dates stored therein according to a format wherein Y_1
 Y_2 is the numerical year designator;

20 selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot
year of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the
earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;
determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each
symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1

C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$
and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or
greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

5 reformatting the symbolic representation of each of
 the dates in the database, without the addition of
 any new data field to the database, with the
 reformatted symbolic representation of each date in
 the database having the values $C_1 C_2, Y_1 Y_2$, in order
 to facilitate collectively further processing the
10 reformatted symbolic representations of each of the
 dates; and

 sorting the dates in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2$.

33. (New) A method of processing symbolic
representations of dates stored in a database,
15 comprising the steps of:

 providing a database with symbolic representations of
 dates stored therein according to a format wherein Y_1
 Y_2 is the numerical year designator;

 selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for the first
20 decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the
 earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

 determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each
 symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1
 C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$

and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and
reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in the database,
5 without changing any of the symbolic representations of a date in the database during the reformatting step, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values $C_1 C_2, Y_1 Y_2$, in order to facilitate collectively further processing the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the dates.

34. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of a database utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored in the at least one date field of the database, which are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of:

20 converting each of the symbolic representations of dates stored in the at least one date field of the database to a symbolic representation of each of the respective dates that does not create the ambiguity, by windowing the symbolic representations of each of the respective dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database against a pivot year

represented by one of the symbolic representations of
the dates as stored in the at least one date field of
the database, without the addition of any new data
field to the database for purposes of such windowing
and converting; and,

running a program collectively on each of the
converted symbolic representations of each of the
respective dates to sort or otherwise manipulate the
dates represented by the converted symbolic
representations, separately from the date data
symbolic representations contained in the at least
one date field of the database.

35. (New) A method of claim 34 further comprising the
step of:

opening the database prior to the step of
converting.

36. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising
the step of:

collectively sorting the converted symbolic
representations prior to the step of running the
program on the converted symbolic representations.

37. (New) The method of claim 35 further comprising
the step of:

collectively sorting the converted symbolic representations prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

5 38. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic representations prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

10 39. (New) The method of claim 35 further comprising the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic representations prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

15 40. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising the step of:

collectively sorting the converted symbolic representations according to a different data field contained in the database from the at least one date field, prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

41. (New) The method of claim 35 further comprising
the step of:

5 collectively sorting the converted symbolic representations according to a different data field contained in the database from the at least one date field, prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

42. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising
10 the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic representations according to a different data field contained in the database from the at least one date field, prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

43. (New) The method of claim 35 further comprising
15 the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic representations according to a different data entry field contained in the database from the at least one date field, prior to the step of running the program on the converted symbolic representations.

44. (New) The method of claim 34 wherein the program performs an operation which manipulates the data in a data field associated with the at least one date field of the database according to the converted symbolic representation of the date.

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45. (New) The method of claim 35 wherein the program performs an operation which manipulates the data in a data field associated with the at least one date field of the database according to the converted symbolic representation of the date.

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46. (New) The method of claim 34 wherein the step of converting includes converting at least a substantial portion of each of the plurality of symbolic representations of dates in the at least one date field and repeating this step until each of the date data entries in the at least one date field is converted into the format that does not have the ambiguity.

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47. (New) The method of claim 35 wherein the step of converting includes converting at least a substantial portion of each of the plurality of symbolic representations of dates in the at least one date field and repeating this step until each of the date data

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entries in the at least one date field is converted
into the format that does not have the ambiguity.

48. (New) The method of claim 46 further comprising
5 the steps of:

collectively sorting the converted symbolic
representations prior to the step of running the
program on the converted symbolic representations.

10 49. (New) The method of claim 47 further comprising
the steps of:

collectively sorting the converted symbolic
representations prior to the step of running the
program on the converted symbolic representations.

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50. (New) The method of claim 46 further comprising
the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic
representations.

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51. (New) The method of claim 49 further comprising
the step of:

collectively manipulating the converted symbolic
representations.

25

52. (New) The method of claim 46 further comprising
the step of:
collectively sorting the converted symbolic
representations according to a different data field in
5 the database than the at least one date field, prior to
the step of running the program.

53. (New) The method of claim 47 further comprising
the step of:
10 collectively sorting the converted symbolic
representations according to a different data field in
the database than the at least one date field, prior to
the step of running the program.

15 54. (New) The method of claim 52 further comprising
the step of:
collectively manipulating the converted symbolic.

55. (New) The method of claim 53 further comprising
20 the step of:
collectively manipulating the converted symbolic
representations.

56. (New) The method of claim 52 wherein the program
25 performs an operation which manipulates the data in a

data field associated with the at least one date field
of the database according to the converted symbolic
representation of the date.

5 57. (New) The method of claim 53 wherein the program
performs an operation which manipulates the data in a
data field associated with the at least one date field
of the database according to the converted symbolic
representation of the date.

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58. (New) The method of claim 54 wherein the program
performs an operation which manipulates the data in a
data field associated with the at least one date field
of the database according to the converted symbolic
representation of the date.

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59. (New) The method of claim 55 wherein the program
performs an operation which manipulates the data in a
data field associated with the at least one date field
of the database according to the converted symbolic
representation of the date.

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60. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates
stored in at least one date field of a database
utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored

in the at least one date field of the database, which
are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in
each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the
steps of:

- 5 converting each of the symbolic representations of
dates stored in the at least one date field of the
database to a symbolic representation of each of the
respective dates that does not create the ambiguity,
by windowing the symbolic representations of each of
10 the respective dates as stored in the at least one
date field of the database against a pivot year
represented by one of the symbolic representations of
the dates as stored in the at least one date field of
the database, without modifying any of the symbolic
15 representations of dates in the at least one date
field of the database for purposes of such windowing
and converting;

running a program on each of the converted symbolic
representations of each of the respective dates to
20 sort or otherwise manipulate data in the database
according to the dates represented by the converted
symbolic representations, separately from the date
data symbolic representations of dates contained in
the at least one date field of the database.

61. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of a database utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored in the at least one date field of the database, which 5 are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of:

converting each of the symbolic representations of dates stored in the at least one date field of the 10 database to a symbolic representation of each of the respective dates that does not create the ambiguity, by windowing the symbolic representations of each of the respective dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database against a pivot year 15 represented by one of the symbolic representations of the dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database, without modifying any of the symbolic representations of dates in the at least date field of the database for purposes of such windowing and 20 converting;

running a program collectively on each of the converted symbolic representations of each of the respective dates to sort or otherwise manipulate the dates represented by the converted symbolic 25 representations, separately from the symbolic

representations of dates contained in the at least one date field of the database.

62. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of a database

5 utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored in the at least one date field of the database, which are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of:

10 converting each of the symbolic representations of dates stored in the at least one date field of the database to a symbolic representation of each of the respective dates that does not create the ambiguity, by windowing the symbolic representations of each of the respective dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database against a pivot year represented by one of the symbolic representations of the dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database, without the addition of any new data field to the database for purposes of such windowing and converting;

storing the converted symbolic representations separate from the at least one date field of the database; and

running a program on the stored converted symbolic representations to sort or otherwise manipulate data in the database according to the dates represented by the converted symbolic representations, separately from the symbolic representations of dates contained in the at least one date field of the database.

63. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of a database utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored in the at least one date field of the database, which are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of:

15 converting each of the symbolic representations of
dates stored in the at least one date field of the
database to a symbolic representation of each of the
respective dates that does not create the ambiguity,
16 by windowing the symbolic representations of each of
the respective dates as stored in the at least one
date field of the database against a pivot year
20 represented by one of the symbolic representations of
the dates as stored in the at least one date field of
the database, without the addition of any new data
21 field to the database for purposes of such windowing
25 and converting;

storing the converted symbolic representations
separate from the at least one date field of the
database; and

running a program collectively on the stored
5 converted symbolic representations to sort or
otherwise manipulate the dates represented by the
converted symbolic representations, separately from
the symbolic representations of dates contained in
the at least one date field of the database.

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64. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates
stored in at least one date field of a database
utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored
in the at least one date field of the database, which
15 are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in
each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the
steps of:

converting each of the symbolic representations of
dates stored in the at least one date field of the
20 database to a symbolic representation of each of the
respective dates that does not create the ambiguity,
by windowing the symbolic representations of each of
the respective dates as stored in the at least one
date field of the database against a pivot year
25 represented by one of the symbolic representations of

the dates as stored in the at least one date field of
the database, without modifying any of the symbolic
representations of dates in the at least one date
field of the database for purposes of such windowing
5 and converting;

storing the converted symbolic representations
separate from the at least one date field in the
database; and

10 running a program on the stored converted symbolic
representations to sort or otherwise manipulate data
in the database according to the dates represented by
the converted symbolic representations, separately
from the symbolic representations of dates contained
in the at least one date field of the database.

15 65. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates
stored in at least one date field of a database
utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored
in the at least one date field of the database, which
are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in
20 each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the
steps of:

25 converting each of the symbolic representations of
dates stored in the at least one date field of the
database to a symbolic representation of each of the
respective dates that does not create the ambiguity,

by windowing the symbolic representations of each of
the respective dates as stored in the at least one
date field of the database against a pivot year
represented by one of the symbolic representations of
5 the dates as stored in the at least one date field of
the database, without modifying any of the symbolic
representations of dates in the at least one date
field of the database for purposes of such windowing
and converting;

10 storing the converted symbolic representations
separate from the at least one date field in the
database; and
running a program collectively on the stored
converted symbolic representations to sort or
15 otherwise manipulate the dates represented by the
converted symbolic representations, separately from
the symbolic representations of dates contained in
the at least one date field of the database.

20 66. (New) A method of processing dates in a database,
comprising the steps of:
providing a database with dates stored in at least
one date field therein according to a format wherein
M₁ M₂ is the numerical month designator, D₁ D₂ is the

numerical day designator, and $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year designator;

selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot date of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in a portion of the at least one date field in the database, without the addition of any new data field to the database, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, $M_1 M_2$, and $D_1 D_2$; and

repeating the step of reformatting until each symbolic representation of a date in the at least one date field has been reformatted in order to facilitate collectively further processing the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the symbolic representations of each of the dates.

67. (New) A method of processing dates in a database, comprising the steps of:

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providing a database with dates stored in at least one date field therein according to a format wherein $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year designator;

5 selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot date of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

10 determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

15 reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in a portion of the at least one date field in the database, without the addition of any new data field to the database, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values $C_1 C_2, Y_1 Y_2$; and

20 repeating the step of reformatting until each symbolic representation of a date in the at least one date field has been reformatted in order to facilitate collectively further processing the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the symbolic representations of each of the dates.

68. (New) A method of processing symbolic representations of dates stored in a database, comprising the steps of:

providing a database with symbolic representations of
dates stored in at least one date field therein
according to a format wherein $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical
year designator;

selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for the first
decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the
earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the at least one
date field of the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each
symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1
 C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$
and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or
greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and

reformatting the symbolic representation of each
symbolic representation of a date in at least one
date field in the database, without the addition of
any new data field to the database, with the
reformatted symbolic representation of each date in
the database having the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, in order
to facilitate further processing of the reformatted
symbolic representations of each of the symbolic

representations of each of the dates, by running a program on the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the dates.

69. (New) A method of processing dates in a database,
5 comprising the steps of:

providing a database with dates stored in at least one date field therein according to a format wherein $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year designator;

selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot year of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the at least one date field of the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and
10 having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in the at least one date field in the database, without the addition of
15 any new data field to the database, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values $C_1 C_2, Y_1 Y_2$;

sorting the reformatted symbolic representations of the dates in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2$; and
20

running a program on the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the dates.

70. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of a database

5 utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored in at least one date field of the database, which are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of

10 converting each of the symbolic representations of dates stored in the at least one date field of the database to a symbolic representation of each of the respective dates that does not create the ambiguity, by windowing the symbolic representations of each of the respective dates as stored in the at least one date field of the database against a pivot year, with the pivot year being less than or equal to the earliest date represented by the symbolic representation of dates stored in the at least one date field, without the addition of any new data field to the database, and without modifying any of the symbolic representations of dates in the at least one date field, for purposes of such windowing and converting; and,

running a program on the converted symbolic representations of each of the dates to sort or otherwise manipulate the dates represented by the converted symbolic representations, separately from the date data symbolic representations contained in the at least one date field of the database.

5 71. (New) A method for representing and utilizing dates stored in at least one date field of the database utilizing symbolic representations of the dates stored
10 in the at least one date field of the database, which are in a format that creates ambiguity between dates in each of a pair of adjacent centuries, comprising the steps of
15 converting each of the symbolic representations of dates stored in the at least one date field of the database to a symbolic representation of each of the respective dates that does not create the ambiguity, by windowing the symbolic representations of each of the respective dates as stored in the at least one
20 date field of the database against a pivot year, with the pivot year being less than or equal to the earliest date represented by a symbolic representation of dates stored in the at least one date field, and without the addition of any new data

field to the database for purposes of such windowing
and converting;

storing each of the converted symbolic
representations of each of the dates separate from
5 the database; and,

running a program on the stored converted symbolic
representations of each of the converted symbolic
representations of the dates to sort or otherwise
manipulate the dates represented by the converted
10 symbolic representations, separately from the date
data symbolic representations contained in the at
least one date field of the database.

72. (New) A method of processing symbolic
representations of dates stored in a database,
15 comprising the steps of

selecting a database with symbolic representations of
dates stored therein according to a format wherein M_1
 M_2 is the numerical month designator, $D_1 D_2$ is the
numerical day designator, and $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical
20 year designator;

selecting a 10-decade window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for
the first decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later
than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the
database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each
symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1
 C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$
and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or
5 greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and,

reformatting the symbolic representation of each
symbolic representation of a date in the database
with the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, $M_1 M_2$, and $D_1 D_2$ prior
to collectively further processing information
10 contained within the database associated with the
respective dates.

73. (New) A method of processing symbolic
representations of dates stored in a database,
comprising the steps of

15 providing a database with symbolic representations of
dates stored therein according to a format wherein Y_1
 Y_2 is the numerical year designator, all of the
symbolic representations of dates falling within a
10-decade period of time;

20 selecting a 10-decade window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for
the first decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later
than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the
database;

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determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each symbolic representation of a date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and,

reformatting the symbolic representation of the date with the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, to facilitate further processing of the dates.

74. (New) A method of processing dates in a database, comprising the steps of

providing a database with symbolic representations of dates stored therein according to a format wherein $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year designator, all of symbolic representations of dates falling within a 10-decade period of time;

selecting a 10-decade window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for the first decade of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

reformatting each date in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2$ to
facilitate further processing of the dates; and,
sorting the dates in the form $C_1 C_2 Y_1 Y_2$.

75. (New) A method of processing symbolic representations of dates stored in a database,
5 comprising the steps of
providing a database with symbolic representations of
dates stored therein according to a format wherein M_1
 M_2 is the numerical month designator, $D_1 D_2$ is the
10 numerical day designator, and $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical
year designator;

selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot
date of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the
earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

15 determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each
symbolic representation of a date in the database, C_1
 C_2 having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$
and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or
greater than $Y_A Y_B$; and

20 reformatting the symbolic representation of each
symbolic representation of a date in the database,
without the addition of any new data field to the
database, with the reformatted symbolic
representation of each date in the database having

the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, $M_1 M_2$, and $D_1 D_2$, in order to facilitate further processing of the reformatted symbolic representations of each of the symbolic representations of each of the dates.

5 76. (New) A method of processing dates in a database, comprising the steps of

providing a database with dates stored therein according to a format wherein $M_1 M_2$ is the numerical month designator, $D_1 D_2$ is the numerical day designator, and $Y_1 Y_2$ is the numerical year designator;

10 selecting a window with a $Y_A Y_B$ value for a pivot date of the window, $Y_A Y_B$ being no later than the earliest $Y_1 Y_2$ year designator in the database;

15 determining a century designator $C_1 C_2$ for each date in the database, $C_1 C_2$ having a first value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is less than $Y_A Y_B$ and having a second value if $Y_1 Y_2$ is equal to or greater than $Y_A Y_B$;

20 reformatting the symbolic representation of each symbolic representation of a date in the database, without the addition of any new data field to the database, with the reformatted symbolic representation of each date in the database having the values $C_1 C_2$, $Y_1 Y_2$, $M_1 M_2$, and $D_1 D_2$, in order to

facilitate further processing of the reformatted
symbolic representations of each of the symbolic
representations of each of the dates; and
sorting the dates in the form C₁ C₂ Y₁ Y₂ M₁ M₂ D₁ D₂.

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